

Sewickley Public Library
500 Thorn Street
Sewickley, PA 15143

PRESS RELEASE

For more information, contact
Carolyn Toth, Library Director
412.741.6920

For immediate release: **Sewickley Library will close on Fridays**

State budget cuts to public libraries are being felt locally. Sewickley Public Library only recently learned that its revenue from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania was reduced by \$20,000 at year end, and according to Carolyn Toth, library director, the library will not receive this fourth-quarter funding from the state for the 2009 budget year. In addition, Sewickley Library is expected to lose an estimated \$52,000 in state revenue in the coming year. State funds account for approximately 9% of Sewickley Library's budget. In the coming year, the library will also lose approximately \$23,000 of Regional Asset District (RAD) funds due to a change in the disbursement formula. "There is no expectation that state or RAD funding will increase in 2010," said Ms. Toth.

Stephanie Dangel, president of the Sewickley Library board of directors, reports that the board looked at every item in the 2010 budget for where savings could be achieved. "We have renegotiated every vendor contract, made staffing adjustments, eliminated some programs, cut back on additions to the library collection, and considered every other option open to us. The result was a decision of the board on December 14 to close the library on Fridays, effective January 8, 2010," she said. Friday was chosen because, statistically, it would impact fewer library users than any other day of the week. Because the library has not been open on Friday evenings, its closing on Fridays will not interfere with evening programs or use of the library by the numerous community organizations that meet there on a regular basis. Modest additional savings will be achieved by opening the library at 10:00 every day instead of 9:30, except Sundays, beginning January 2.

"While there is no talk of restoring state funding to libraries to previous levels, I would still urge all of us to remind our elected officials of the central role libraries play in our communities," said Joan Murdoch, vice president of the Sewickley Library board of directors. "These are difficult economic times, and we will need to work harder to seek additional funding. The Quaker Valley School District, which provides approximately 46% of the library's budget, cannot make up the difference. We are fortunate to have an active Friends of the Library organization and terrific community support."

There is good news, however, on the library front. Sewickley Public Library was named a "Star Library" for the second year in a row by Library Journal, the premier publication of the library profession. Of more than 7,000 libraries analyzed, less than 300 were awarded this national distinction based on the number of visits to the library, circulation of materials, program attendance, and public Internet use. Only six Pennsylvania libraries received this distinction in 2008 and only five in 2009.

A top priority of the library board will be to reopen the library on Fridays as soon as it is economically feasible, said Wayne Murphy, treasurer of the board.

Effective January 2, 2010, the new SPL hours will be:

Monday – Thursday: **10:00 a.m.** – 9:00 p.m.

Friday – **Closed**

Saturday: **10:00 a.m.** – 5:00 p.m.

Sunday: 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.